

The Married Life of Helen and Warren

By MABEL HERBERT URNER

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Helen Comes in Touch With a Real Tragedy, but Warren Is Brutally Unsympathetic

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Helen stood brooding at the window, looking out on the grayness of the early London dusk. It was not four, but the street lamps were already lit and lights gleamed in many windows.

It was raw and damp. People hurried by with drawn shoulders and upturned collars, their faces gravely anxious. A subdued excitement was in the air. With constant rumors of Zeppelin raids, the Londoners were at last aroused.

She went into the bedroom. As she gazed moodily across the narrow courtyard, a woman's form was suddenly outlined against the drawn blind of a lighted window. Her every movement was clearly silhouetted.

Helen watched her, fascinated. With clenched hands she was walking up and down the room. Then she dropped into a chair, her face buried in its cushioned seat, her shoulders quivering with convulsive sobs. There were abandonment and abject grief in every line of her slender figure.

Something that looked like a newspaper lay on the floor beside her. Helen's thoughts leaped to that daily column of killed and wounded.

At any other time she would not have followed the impulse that now came to her. But the war had broken down many barriers.

The next moment Helen was hurrying down the hall to the apartment opposite. It was some time before her timid ring was answered.

"Who is it?" asked a tremulous voice, the door opening a few inches.

"Mrs. Curtis—from the apartment next door," faltered Helen.

The door opened wider, the woman still abiding herself behind it.

"I—I know you're in trouble," impulsively. "I saw you through the window—the curtain was down, but I could see your shadow. Don't think me intrusive, but I knew you were alone—and I couldn't help coming."

The woman's only answer was to turn back into the room and throw herself sobbing on the couch. Helen followed, constrained and awkward. After all, what could she do—what could any stranger do?

"It's someone—in the war?" gently, drawing a chair beside her.

The head or the pillow nodded. Helen took one of the hot, clenched hands in both her own.

A small desk clock ticked harshly. Then the woman sat up and looked at her dully.

"Oh, it's not what you think," recklessly. "It's not my husband or my brother—or anyone whom I can grieve over openly. That's why I'm alone. I don't dare have anyone with me—anyone that might know."

Helen felt a tightening in her throat; she did not attempt to speak. "He was brought home yesterday wounded—fatally, the papers said. That's all I know. I can't go to him. I can't even telephone—they'd know my voice." She looked unflinchingly at Helen, "He's—another woman's husband."

Helen did not start or draw back; her hold on the hot hand tightened. "This morning I drove by in a cab. The blinds were down, but there was no—crape. I'm going again tonight. Oh, it's torture—not knowing!"

Abruptly she rose and took from a desk drawer a leather-cased photograph. It was a strong, clean-cut face of a virile Englishman.

"There was nothing the whole world couldn't have known," her burning eyes were on the picture. "And yet—now that he's dying I'm almost sorry there wasn't!" defiantly. "Can you understand that?"

Helen nodded.

"Oh, we're more natural, more primitive in times like these! That's why I can tell you this. And yet," slowly, "if he should get well—it would be just the same. Oh, we've made such a waste of our lives—such a pitiful waste! It was all my fault, but I've paid for it," bitterly. "I've paid for one foolish, hysterical moment with six years of torture."

"Six years," breathed Helen.

"We were engaged," she steadied her voice. "Oh, it was such a trivial thing we quarreled over! And he—he took it seriously. He threw up everything and went to India. Last

year he married and came back to London. We knew the same people, we couldn't help meeting. His wife doesn't care—she's always with other men."

"Then he began coming here. He never made an engagement, yet I came to expect him every Wednesday at five—I lived for that hour. We never talked—I mean about this. Yet we both knew."

"The day he left for the war—he came to say good-by. He tried to make it a conventional call—but I couldn't. I was the one to break down. He said there was only one solution—for him not to come back."

"Her voice broke. She looked at Helen with hopeless eyes. "Oh, how I've watched the papers! But there's been nothing until yesterday."

"And yet," murmured Helen, "if you had married him, wouldn't giving him up now be even harder than it is?"

"Harder?" fiercely. "If we'd had six years of happiness, would our lives have been wasted? Six years with him! I'd barter my soul for one!"

"Oh, I can't stand this," hysterically. "I must know," turning desperately to the desk phone. "No—no, I mustn't phone. Don't let me!"

"I—Can't I phone for you?" faltered Helen.

"Oh," looking at her wildly, "why didn't I think of that? Eight-two-six-nine Mayfair," excitedly. "Ask for Lieutenant—No—wait, I can't give you his name!"

"Need I know his name? Couldn't I say the lieutenant?"

"Yes—yes," eagerly, thrusting the receiver into Helen's hand.

"Eight-two-six-nine Mayfair? I would like to know how the lieutenant is."

"Lieutenant Carson died this morning at eleven thirty," came the answer.

Although he immediately rang off, Helen still held the receiver. How could she tell her?

But the woman's intuition needed no words.

"When did he die?" her voice was curiously quiet.

"At eleven thirty."

"That was after I drove by this morning. He was there then—I might have seen him!" Then abruptly, "You'll understand if I ask you to go now, won't you? I think I'd rather be alone."

"Oh, I can't leave, you know," frightened at her strange quietness. "You mustn't be alone. Let me stay with you or send for someone."

She shook her head. "I couldn't have anyone here without telling them. But you needn't be anxious."

"But later, in the night, if you should need one—will you let me know? Promise me that! I can't bear to think of you here alone."

"Yes, I promise."

And with that Helen had to be content. She went back down the hall haunted by the picture of that woman alone with her grief.

When she opened the door she started with dismay at the sound of Warren whistling.

"Hello!" without looking up. "This blamed London mud sticks like—" Then he saw her face. "What the deuce's the matter now?"

"Oh, dear, I—I've been with the woman next door," trying to hide her face against his unresponsive arm.

"Who's the woman next door?" elbowing her away, the whiskbroom in his hand. "What are you sniveling about, anyway?"

It was hard to tell such a story while Warren, grimly unsympathetic, brushed his clothes, put on a fresh collar and cleaned his nails. Helen stumbled through it brokenly.

"Told all that yarn to you, eh? Sounds like it was made out of whole cloth. Guess there's a lot she didn't tell."

"Warren, stop!" turning on him fiercely. "Oh, I shouldn't have told you! I might have known you wouldn't understand. She's refined, delicate—"

"Hub!" attacking his hair savagely, a brush in each hand, "not much delicacy in spilling off that tale to a stranger."

"Oh, how can you be so hard!" passionately. "Sometimes I think you haven't any—"

"Well, I'm not haunting my feelings in everybody's face. I've always said women had no sense of reticence. Think a man would blast out a story like that? Not if you grilled him on hot irons!"

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Acting Director of Sunday School Course of Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.)

LESSON FOR JUNE 13

BLESSEDNESS OF FORGIVENESS.

LESSON TEXT—Psalm 32. GOLDEN TEXT—Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered—Psalm 32:1.


This psalm is believed to have grown out of David's experience with Nathan (see Rom. 4:6-8). It is the second of the seven so-called "penitential psalms" (Ps. 32, 38, 51, 102, 139, 143). While it is sad, it is at the same time one of the most joyful of all psalms. It is the record of bitter sorrow and also of heartfelt praise, and is as vital in its message today as the day it was given to the world.

I. The State or Condition of Happiness. (1) What is happiness? vv. 1, 2. The blessed or happy man is the one whose sin is covered. God only can forgive sin and has plainly set before us his agency, viz., the shed blood. David as king enjoyed the pleasures of life, but he also knew the result of hidden sin, of sins covered. The joy of forgiveness is offered to all who accept God's gift of justification (Acts 10:43). The psalmist seems to multiply words. "Transgression" means rebellion; "sin" to miss the mark (Rom. 3:23); "iniquity," to be crooked. When men try to cover sin we are expressly told the result (Prov. 28:13), but God literally takes away when he forgives and "covers" sin (John 1:29; Ps. 103:12; 85:2). Neither man or devil can uncover what he has covered. (2) Who is unhappy? vv. 3, 4. Contrasted with the state or condition of happiness granted to the forgiven sinner is presented that of those unforgiven. David kept silence without only to have a raging tempest within—lips silent, bones "roaring." During the days of David's silence following his sinful act he was guilty of increased acts of sin and cruelty (2 Sam. 12:31). The origin of the word Selah is not known. It probably indicated a musical interlude and in this psalm most appropriately and dramatically appears. (3) How we may be happy, vv. 5, 6. All sin is uncovered to God. His all-seeing eye can penetrate man's futile endeavors to hide his transgressions. The first step to forgiveness and to happiness is confession of guilt. God's heavy hand wrought saving faith in David and such faith has as its first condition confession, "I acknowledged my sin." Such confession is full and frank. Nothing is held back nor has it any element of hypocrisy, and it always secures results (1 John 1:9; Luke 15:20-23).

The godly man, the man who is the recipient of God's grace thus bestowed, prays in a time "when thou mayest be found," or (see margin) "in the time of finding out sin" (v. 6 R. V.). The prophet tells us that there is a time when we may not find God (Isa. 55:6) and Paul tells us when he may be found (II Cor. 6:2).

II. How to Continue in the State of Being Happy. (1) Our security (v. 7). When men forgive they do not "cover." What God hides he forgets (Isa. 38:17; Micah 7:19). Our security, our "hiding place" is Jehovah. Our preserver is Jehovah (Ps. 91:31; Isa. 32:1, 2). Jehovah preserves from trouble those whom he forgives (Ps. 34:19). Such men have a serenity, a "peace" even the "peace of God" which the sinner can never have (Isa. 26:3; Rom. 5:1; Phil. 4:7). (2) Our instructor (vv. 8, 9). (a) Positively—we have one who not only forgives and blots out the past but one who has promised to "instruct" to "teach" and to "guide." Nearly all believe that the introduction of the personal pronouns in verse 8 indicate that God is speaking in response to David's appeal recorded in verse 6. Jehovah guides with his "eye upon" us (v. 8 R. V.). He instructs us by his spirit through his Word (Ps. 119:105; John 16:13). (b) Negatively—Some must needs be directed by "bit and bridle." Some have to learn through bitter experience. We have our choice. Those who will not listen to instruction are compared to the horse and the mule who "have no understanding." Even so they are more useful than those who wildly run after sin. Only thus can some "come near" (v. 9 R. V.) though that is better than not to be brought near at all. (3) Our faith (v. 9). What kind of a life will God's forgiven children live? What is one of the foremost characteristics of a happy life? Here is the answer, "He that trusteth in the Lord." This is the conclusion of the whole matter.

Our only joy is in the Lord "who hath done marvelous things whereof we are glad."



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BIG REWARD FOR INVENTIONS

British Government is Encouraging Ideas Tending to Improve Development of Army Equipment.

That there are handsome rewards for those who are able to devise improvements in guns and machinery is shown in sums that have been paid in fees to inventors at army ordnance factories for the year ending March, 1914. No less than £4,000, for instance, was paid to Col. C. L. Holden, late superintendent of the royal gun and carriage factories, for various inventions and improvements connected with ordnance mountings, machine tools, etc., in addition to £500 paid on another account; while £2,850 was paid to Mr. W. T. Thomson, chemist and manager, respectively, of the Royal Gunpowder factory, for improvements in the manufacture of nitrocellulose and accompanying apparatus, in addition to a previous £1,150.

Smaller amounts, such as £250 to Mr. W. H. Turton, manager of the Royal Gun factory, for improved machines for the manufacture of ordnance; £100 to Mr. W. Lambert for a process for testing steel bullets; £25 each to William Rogers and E. F. Pular for labor-saving and improved tools for use at the Royal Carriage department, and £20 to Assistant Foreman S. Capon, Royal Gun Factory forges, for improved muffle for use in forges, have also been paid.—Tit-Bits.

Liberal Juries.

Based on verdicts by Mississippi juries Law Notes recommends that state as a place where money is easy. The case of Illinois Central railroad vs. Dacus resulted in a verdict for \$500 to a prospective passenger because a ticket agent said "d—n" to him; while in Alabama, etc., Railroad company vs. Morris it appeared that a liberal jury gave \$15,000 to a white woman who was compelled to ride a short distance with three negroes, although the stingy court cut the verdict to \$2,000.

A newspaper's income springs from three sources. Advertising, subscriptions and the owners of lost dogs.

Troubles and thunderclouds usually seem black in the distance, but grow lighter as they approach.

Smile, smile, beautiful clear white clothes. Red Cross Ball Blue, American made, therefore best. All grocers. Adv.

Conversation attains its most asinine form in the grandstand at the ball park.

What It Does.

"There's nothing like adversity to bring a man out."
"Yes, out at the elbows."

The Villain Outvillained.
"I wouldn't trust him," she argued. "Neither would I," assented the other girl; "he's as treacherous as a fountain pen."

Ashamed of Them.
"I see the Sayre baby cried with loud protest when it was made a Christian."

"Well, when you see the way Christians are acting just now in the world, can you blame the baby?"

Caught.

"What a pretty hat, Mrs. Pinkey wore this evening."

"Did you like it, dear?"

"Yes, it was very becoming. Why don't you get hats like that?"

"You mustn't blame me if I laugh, John. The hat you like is my hat. Mrs. Pinkey borrowed it this evening. It's the \$30 hat you called a fright."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Too Sour.

Professor Copeland of Harvard, as the story goes, reproved his students for coming late to class.

"This is a class in English composition," he remarked with sarcasm, "not an afternoon tea."

At the next meeting one girl was twenty minutes late. Professor Copeland waited until she had taken her seat. Then he remarked bitterly: "How will you have your tea, Miss Brown?"

"Without the lemon, please," Miss Brown answered quite gently.—Christian Register.

The Direct Relation

Between What We Eat and What We Are Is Well Established

This is both reasonable and scientific, for activity uses up tissue cells of body and brain which must be replaced daily from proper food.

A careful eater—one who selects food for its nutritional value—is usually strong in body and keen in mind.

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